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24 March 1954

THE EGYPTIAN SITUATION

I. Internal Situation

A. Egyptian internal situation continues confused.

1. Nagib - Nasr apparently still in conflict behind scenes.
2. Restoration all Nagib's former offices on 8 March represented victory over Nasr-dominated RCC.
3. Nagib's future role and authority undefined.

4.

5. Continued maneuvering within RCC expected, but members, except Khalid Muhi al-Din, apparently loyal to Nasr.

B. Popular demand for return to parliamentary government poses problems for military regime.

1. Difficult to control elections in June for constituent assembly without effective political organization.
2. RCC plans to retain authority after election of constituent assembly.
3. Faces problem of how to control opposition with

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4. Extremist Moslem Brotherhood and opposition politicians already taking advantage of announcement forthcoming elections.

5. Any unrestricted political activity will bring direct challenge to RCC's position and authority.

C. Deteriorating security situation in Suez Canal zone reflected in increased attacks on British military personnel in zone, presenting regime with another difficult situation at this critical time.

1. Britain in formal protest attacks has stated no negotiation on withdrawal of its troops possible until order restored. This can be complied with by regime.

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4. Confused power position inside Egyptian government

itself complicates any Suez negotiations.

B. Despite problems there is genuine Egyptian desire for early settlement. Would represent important political victory.

Prospects good if:

1. Immediately negotiated. Before campaign for June

elections begin with intemperate utterances.

2. Complete evacuation publicized and sold to people.

3. Nagib and Nasr will work together. This is possibly the crucial point.

C. Regime-controlled National Liberation Rally and commercial elements will probably support settlement.

D. Nationalist Wafd, Moslem Brotherhood and Communists may oppose settlement. However Wafd and Brotherhood may find it difficult not to accept a settlement which is publicized as "complete evacuation."

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